

FILELLUM SERPENS (HASSALL, 1848) (CNIDARIA,
HYDROZOA): PROPOSED CONSERVATION OF BOTH
GENERIC AND SPECIFIC NAMES. Z.N.(S.)2508

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Introduction

The hydroid species *Filellum serpens* (Hassall, 1848) is common and near-cosmopolitan in recorded distribution, but it happens that neither the genus name nor the species name applied to it is the oldest available. Strict application of the Code would cause confusion and a case is made for the conservation of both names.

Coppinia Hassall, 1848

With the exception of a single genus (*Cryptolarella* Stechow, 1913, p. 138), hydroids of the nominotypical subfamily LAFOEINAE of the family LAFOEIDAE Hincks, 1868 (p. 198) have aggregated gonophores known as coppinia. Resembling muffs or nests, coppinia occur on the stems and larger branches of erect species and on the stolons of those which are reptant, and in several genera are protected by a tangle of modified hydrothecal tubes. Such aggregated gonophores were initially believed to be distinct taxa growing as parasites or epizoids on other hydroids. The term coppinia is derived from the genus name *Coppinia* Hassall, 1848 (p. 2223; described more fully in Hassall & Coppin, 1852, p. 160), established to accommodate a supposedly parasitic hydroid later shown (Levensen, 1893, p. 162) to have been just such clustered lafoeid gonophores. Although scarcely used this century, the name *Coppinia* is available and threatens the familiar and widely used name *Filellum* Hincks, 1868 (p. 214), a name introduced in a well known monograph on hydroids. *Filellum serpens* (Hassall, 1848) (p. 2223, as *Campanularia*), type species of *Filellum* by monotypy, is a stolonial species commonly found epizoid on other hydroids in all oceans. It is inconspicuous except for its relatively large coppinia, but is distinctive and often reported in faunal surveys.

2. The species name *serpens* was published in 1848 by Gray also (p. 151, as '*Capsularia serpens*, n.s.; *Campanularia serpens* Hassall, mss'). Although the exact dates of publication of Gray's or Hassall's works could not easily be ascertained, Sherborn (1926, p. 272) recorded Gray's work being shown to the Trustees of the British Museum on 31 August 1848 for approval prior to publication. A note inside a copy in the British Museum (Natural History) library records the receipt of the published copy by the

Museum on 25 September 1848, so it can be assumed that Gray's work was published between 31 August 1848 and 25 September 1848. Hassall's (1848) paper on p. 2223 of volume 6 of *Zoologist* is, according to a note by C. D. Sherborn on the title page of the Museum copy, in the eighth monthly part for that year. Part 8 corresponded to August of 1848 and would have been published, according to the preamble to the volume, 'three days before the end of each month'. Thus Hassall's paper should have been published on 28 August 1848. If so, his use of *serpens* would probably have had priority over Gray's. We assume that this is so. Reasons for not employing the genus names *Capsularia* Cuvier, 1797 (p. 665), and *Reticularia* Thomson, 1853 (p. 443), were given by Cornelius (1975, p. 378).

3. The nominal species *Coppinia mirabilis* Hassall, 1848 (p. 2223; described more fully in Hassall & Coppin, 1852, p. 160), type species of *Coppinia* by monotypy, was based on a single colony overgrowing another hydroid, *Hydrallmania falcata* (Linnaeus, 1758, p. 810) (type specimen of *C. mirabilis* BMNH 1973.10.8.3, on herbarium sheet). P.F.S.C. examined the specimen and found it to be a fertile colony of the species known today as *Filellum serpens* (Hassall, 1848). The type specimen of *Campanularia serpens* Hassall, 1848 (overgrowing colony of *Abietinaria abietina* (Linnaeus, 1758, p. 808), British Museum (Natural History) 1973.10.8.4, on herbarium sheet) has also been examined and found to conform to the modern concept of *F. serpens*. We conclude that Hassall (1848) simultaneously and unwittingly based two nominal species, *Coppinia mirabilis* and *Campanularia serpens*, on material of the same species, thus making either species name available for *F. serpens* auct. Of these two names we select as first revisers the more widely used species name *serpens* as having priority.

4. *Coppinia mirabilis* Hassall, 1848, a junior subjective synonym of *Coppinia arcta* (Dalyell, 1847, p. 224, as *Sertularia*), has commonly been assumed to be conspecific with *Lafoea dumosa* (Fleming, 1820, p. 83, as *Sertularia*), a species recently revised by Cornelius (1975, p. 385). This is based on a misinterpretation of the discovery by Levinsen (1893, p. 162) that the gonophores of hydroids belonging to the genera *Lafoea* Lamouroux, 1821 (p. 8), *Grammaria* Stimpson, 1853 (p. 9) and *Filellum* Hincks, 1868 (p. 214) are aggregated into coppinia and are identical with nominal species once referred to the genus *Coppinia*. It happens that the name *Coppinia* has mistakenly been regarded as a junior synonym, in part or in whole, of *Lafoea* (e.g. Levinsen, 1893, p. 170; Bedot, 1905, p. 61; Stechow, 1923, p. 137). However, our reidentification of the type specimen of *Coppinia mirabilis* as identical with *Campanularia serpens* shows that the genus name *Coppinia* is available as a senior synonym of the universally used name *Filellum*. The word 'coppinia' has become familiar in accounts of the subfamily LAFOEINAE and promulgation of *Coppinia* as a genus name might well cause confusion. It would unquestionably upset existing usage of *Filellum* and we consequently request suppression of the genus name *Coppinia*.

5. The genera *Sertularia* Linnaeus, 1758 (p. 807) and *Campanularia* Lamarck, 1816 (p. 112) have both long since been redefined so as to preclude

any question of the nominal species *Sertularia arcta* Dalyell, 1847, or *Campanularia serpens* Hassall, 1848, being retained in either genus (summaries in Cornelius, 1979, p. 249; Cornelius, 1982, p. 51). Thus *Coppinia* Hassall, 1848, a name scarcely used this century, is the oldest available genus name for *C. serpens*. The exhaustive literature reviews of Bedot (1905, 1910, 1912, 1916, 1918, 1925) listed 58 uses of the name *Coppinia* between 1848 and 1905, including the first uses of it by Hassall and Gray. Bedot listed no later uses of *Coppinia*, nor are there any listed in *Zoological Record*. Indeed, it is remarkable how soon the name *Coppinia* fell into disuse once Levinsen (1893, pp. 162, 170) showed that it was based merely on reproductive structures of known taxa.

6. In contrast, the name *Filellum* Hincks, 1868, has been widely used in the hydroid literature of the past 100 years. A list of ten major works in the last 50 years establishes a prima facie case for its continued use: Fraser, 1944, p. 215; Naumov, 1960, p. 280; Blanco, 1967, p. 103; Calder, 1970, p. 1522; Vervoort, 1972, p. 50; Cornelius, 1975, p. 378; Millard, 1975, p. 175; Stepanjants, 1979, p. 48; Gili i Sarda, 1982, p. 55; Cornelius & Ryland, in press.

Sertularia arcta Dalyell, 1847

7. We concur with the opinion of Hincks (1868, p. 219) and others that the nominal species *Sertularia arcta* Dalyell, 1847 (p. 224, pl. 42) is conspecific with *Coppinia mirabilis* Hassall, 1848, and hence in our view with *Filellum serpens* auct. In the first description of *S. arcta* it was stated by Dalyell that its hydranth had only eight tentacles and that the planula was green. Hincks (1868, p. 220) reported that hydranths of '*C. arcta*' had 8–10 tentacles and were greenish-yellow. Few subsequent authors have described the hydranth of this species. Broch (1911, fig. 20a) gave no textual description but provided an illustration of the hydranth of *Filellum serpens* showing nine tentacles. The same illustration was reproduced by Kramp (1935, fig. 54a) and Vervoort (1946, fig. 82). Hamond (1957, p. 308, fig. 15) provided a new illustration showing 11 tentacles, and stated in his description that the number was 'about 12'. Hydranths of the only species from which *F. serpens* need be distinguished in British waters, *Lafoea dumosa* Fleming, 1820 (p. 83), have 16 tentacles even when young and older ones have up to about 20 (P.F.S.C., unpublished). Dalyell also described *L. dumosa* in his 1847 work and there seems little possibility that his *S. arcta* was identical with it. All evidence corroborates Hincks' identification as *F. serpens*. The species name *arcta* Dalyell, 1847, which predates *serpens*, has like the genus name *Coppinia* fallen into disuse. Neither Bedot (1925) nor *Zoological Record* listed uses subsequent to 1905. Indeed, *arcta* and the genus name *Coppinia* were used almost solely in mutual combination and the comments in paragraph 5 apply to both genus and species names. Therefore, we request that *arcta* Dalyell, 1847, be suppressed in favour of *serpens* Hassall, 1848.

8. The species name *serpens* has been widely used both before the turn of the century and since, usually in the combination *Filellum serpens*.

The 10 important works mentioned in paragraph 6 also illustrate the usage of the species name *serpens*.

Campanularia intertexta Couch, 1844

9. The nominal species *Campanularia intertexta* Couch, 1844 (pp. 41–42, pl. 11, fig. 3) was referred to *Lafoea dumosa* (Fleming, 1820, p. 83) by Cornelius (1982, p. 122). He reported that the type specimen of *C. intertexta* was almost certainly not extant. However, the identity of this nominal species is in doubt. The possibility that the type specimen of *intertexta* included *Filellum serpens* has not been adequately eliminated. Couch stated that the species as he conceived it grew on both *Lafoea dumosa* and *Sertularella polyzonias* (Linnaeus, 1758, p. 813, as *Sertularia*). The latter substrate is more typical for *F. serpens* and, as deduced by Cornelius (1982), it is plausible that Couch's type series of *intertexta* included *F. serpens* as well as *L. dumosa* (in addition to *Orthopyxis integra* (Macgillivray, 1842, p. 465), as *Campanularia*: see Cornelius, 1982, p. 122). Cornelius designated the specimen of which the coppiniae were illustrated as lectotype of *C. intertexta*, expressly discriminating it from the clearly epizoic *O. integra* (a distinction not made by Couch). Despite the assertion by Cornelius (1982, p. 122) it is not at present possible to determine whether the illustrated coppinia was of *L. dumosa* or of *F. serpens*. Nevertheless one or other is considered to have been in the mixed type series. If the coppinia were to be identified as *F. serpens*, then the older name *serpens* would become threatened by *intertexta* and an additional case for the conservation of *serpens* would have to be made to the Commission. So far as we know the name *intertexta* has been employed in the original sense only twice since Couch's work (references in Bedot, 1905–1925) and we therefore request its suppression in favour of *serpens*.

Conchella Gray, 1848

10. *Campanularia intertexta* Couch, 1844, is the type species (by monotypy) of the genus *Conchella* Gray, 1848 (p. 88). Hence, if the type specimen of *C. intertexta* were identified as *F. serpens*, the name *Conchella* might threaten the widely used genus name *Filellum* Hincks, 1868 (see previous paragraph). The index of Bedot (1905–1925), covering literature up to 1910, indicated no subsequent uses of *Conchella*, whereas the genus name *Filellum* had been widely used. The references listed in paragraph 6 establish a prima facie case for the continued use of *Filellum* and we therefore request that *Conchella* be suppressed.

Proposals

11. The International Commission on Zoological Nomenclature is accordingly asked:

(1) to use its plenary powers to suppress the following generic names for the purposes of the Principle of Priority:

(a) *Coppinia* Hassall, 1848 (gender: masculine), type species by monotypy, *Coppinia mirabilis* Hassall, 1848;

- (b) *Conchella* Gray, 1848 (gender: feminine), type species by monotypy, *Campanularia intertexta* Couch, 1844;
- (2) to use its plenary powers to suppress the following specific names for the purposes of the Principle of Priority:
 - (a) *arcta* Dalyell, 1847, as published in the binomen *Sertularia arcta*;
 - (b) *intertexta* Couch, 1844, as published in the binomen *Campanularia intertexta*;
- (3) to place on the Official List of Generic Names in Zoology the name *Filellum* Hincks, 1868 (gender: neuter), type species by monotypy, *Campanularia serpens* Hassall, 1848;
- (4) to place on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology the name *serpens* Hassall, 1848, as published in the binomen *Campanularia serpens* (specific name of the type species of *Filellum* Hincks, 1868);
- (5) to place the following names, as suppressed in (1) above, on the Official Index of Rejected and Invalid Generic Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *Coppinia* Hassall, 1848;
 - (b) *Conchella* Gray, 1848;
- (6) to place the following names on the Official List of Rejected and Invalid Specific Names in Zoology:
 - (a) *arcta* Dalyell, 1847, as published in the binomen *Sertularia arcta* and as suppressed under the plenary powers in (2) (a) above;
 - (a) *intertexta* Couch, 1844, as published in the binomen *Campanularia intertexta* and as suppressed under the plenary powers in (2)(b) above.

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